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questions  
and  
answers  
about

**Eradicating**

**HOG  
CHOLERA**

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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## questions and answers about . . .

# ERADICATING HOG CHOLERA

Hog cholera is being eradicated.

In the United States we have a long history of eradicating animal diseases, starting back in 1892 when contagious pleuropneumonia was wiped out. Other diseases which have followed suit and no longer exist in this country include Texas fever, foot-and-mouth disease, and vesicular exanthema (VE), to name just a few.

Thus, eradication of disease is not revolutionary. So if we work together, hog cholera can be whipped.

### What will eradication mean to producers?

To the swine industry, it will mean the end of a \$50-million-a-year continuing cost—the cost of living with the disease. To the individual producer it will mean the end of worrying about this disease—plus more profit. It's estimated that the net profit from one pig out of every five marketed goes to pay for hog cholera control.

### What is the approach to hog cholera eradication?

Basically, it's the same as with any disease eradication program: Find the disease, confine it, and eradicate it.

### Does this program work the same as other eradication programs—brucellosis, for example?

No, not exactly. The reason for this is that the two diseases are quite different. So the eradication programs are different, too. Brucellosis is a chronic disease, hard to detect in many cases except by testing individual animals. Hog cholera, on the other hand, is usually an acute disease. So if the disease is present, you'll soon know that something is wrong.

## Well then, how does the hog cholera eradication program operate?

The cooperative State-Federal eradication program is divided into four steps or phases. They are: Phase I—Preparation; Phase II—Reduction of Incidence; Phase III—Elimination of Outbreaks; and Phase IV—Protection against Reinfection. Each of these phases represents a gradual buildup in a State's fight against cholera.

The standards for this four-phase program were approved by representatives of State livestock disease control officials prior to being adopted by USDA as a framework for developing cooperative programs with the States.

### Just exactly what is involved in each of these four phases? What happens first?

Phase I—Preparation—is just what the name implies: Getting the program underway. Before a cooperative program can be formally started, a State must have certain basic laws or regulations. Making sure these necessary State authorities are established before beginning a program helps prevent roadblocks later on.

State and county hog cholera eradication committees are organized during Phase I and they help distribute information to producers. Other important activities carried out in this phase are (1) reporting all outbreaks promptly by telephone, (2) investigating each outbreak completely to find its source, and (3) re-emphasizing garbage cooking through increased inspection of commercial garbage feeders.

### How does a State move into Phase II of the program?

When a State has all the procedures outlined above in operation at the proper level, it can enter Phase II, "Reduction of Incidence." As the name implies, the objective here is to cut down the number of outbreaks. New eradication measures applied in

this phase include (1) quarantining all outbreaks, with provisions for supervised disposal of infected animals, and (2) establishing intrastate shipping rules to prevent feeder pigs and breeding stock, moving from markets back to farms, from spreading hog cholera.

### What's required to go into Phase III—Elimination of Outbreaks?

This is the first phase in which Federal indemnities can be paid for hogs destroyed because of cholera.

A State enters this phase after it has sufficiently reduced the incidence of hog cholera by carrying out all the steps in the first two phases. The primary goal in Phase III is to promptly eliminate those few infected and exposed herds which remain to threaten the eradication program—in other words, to progress from the intensive control program developed in the first two phases to an active eradication program. This could include cooperative State-Federal indemnities for hogs destroyed because of hog cholera.

Federal participation in indemnities is intended only for the final stages of the program—after incidence of the disease has been reduced to a low level and State and Federal regulatory officials agree that indemnity payments are an efficient method to wipe out the remaining infection. In any event, Phase III operations involve partial or complete depopulation of infected herds—that is, supervised removal of the animals so that they do not spread the disease.

### When does a State enter the final phase of the program?

When hog cholera apparently does not exist in a State, it can move into Phase IV—"Protection against Reinfection." All the steps in the preceding phases must be in full operation. In addition, the State must have provisions for complete depopulation of any infected herd—with indemnity pay-

ments—and must put into effect more stringent rules on importation of feeder pigs and breeding swine.

A State in Phase IV can be declared hog cholera free when it meets certain standards. These standards have been adopted by the U.S. Livestock Sanitary Association—an organization representing State animal disease control officials—and have been approved by the USDA.

### Why aren't indemnities scheduled in the early stages of the program?

It's primarily a matter of economics—finding the most practical means of getting rid of hog cholera. Eradication measures such as prompt reporting and investigation of outbreaks, combined with quarantines, can eliminate a lot of cholera themselves—without paying indemnities.

### Then why use indemnities at all?

To eliminate the final traces of cholera, it's imperative to treat each outbreak on an emergency or "stamp out" basis: That is, the immediate disposal of all the hogs in an infected herd. And, in most cases where such action is necessary, there are provisions for indemnity payments.

Also, offering cooperative indemnity payments will stimulate maximum reporting of outbreaks.

### But is it right to pay a man for his own sick pigs?

Indemnities are intended as a protective measure for healthy herds, rather than as payment for sick ones. Their purpose is to help eradicate disease. The fact that someone gets paid for his sick pigs is incidental.

In the latter stages of the program, there will be very few outbreaks. Payment of indemnities at this point, to assist in quickly eliminating these infected herds and thus prevent further spread, is necessary to help protect the vast majority of swine producers from hog cholera.

FIND

CONFINE

ERADICATE

NO HOG CHOLERA • NO NEED TO VACCINATE



## How will cooperative indemnities work?

As mentioned, cooperative State-Federal indemnity payments will not be offered until a State reaches Phase III of the four-phase program. Under provisions of Federal indemnity regulations, hogs destroyed because of hog cholera would be appraised at their full market value. However, no appraisal for an animal's breeding value can exceed three times the animal's meat or feeding value. And in no case can the Federal share of the indemnity be greater than \$40 per head for grade animals or \$50 per head for purebred swine. (Only purebred animals and grade sows can be appraised for breeding value.) In addition, the Federal share of cooperative indemnities cannot exceed 50 percent of the difference between the appraised value and the net salvage received for the destroyed swine.

## What is the role of vaccination in the eradication program?

Vaccination has been and still is an important part of the hog cholera eradication program. From the individual producer's standpoint, proper and effective vaccination is still the best protection against hog cholera. It is, perhaps, his main contribution to the eradication program. From the standpoint of the program as a whole, increased vaccination cuts down the number of hogs which can contract the disease and thus helps reduce the incidence of hog cholera to the point where other eradication measures can be used more effectively.

Vaccination is more essential in some areas of the country than others. It's more important, for instance, in areas of moderate to heavy swine population—and where hog cholera is a continual problem.

## Which vaccine should I use?

This depends on your individual situation. Your veterinarian is in the best position to prescribe the proper vaccine to use in your herd.

## What does eradication mean?

It means just what it says—wiping out a disease. A more technical definition is: Elimination of the virus or disease-causing organism so that no outbreaks occur, even in the absence of control measures—including vaccination.

## **But will we really ever be able to stop vaccinating for hog cholera?**

We most certainly will. There will be no *need* to vaccinate, once the disease is eradicated. Other countries vaccinate for foot-and-mouth disease, just as a matter of course, but we don't—because it has been eradicated from this country. Canada, which eradicated hog cholera, stopped its vaccination program many years ago.

Most of our present cost of "living with hog cholera" is due to necessary vaccination, rather than actual death losses. So it certainly wouldn't make much sense to have an eradication program unless this continuing cost can be eliminated.

## **How can we eradicate the disease and stop vaccinating if we can be reinfected from other countries?**

Again, foot-and-mouth disease is an excellent example. Within this country we have no control measures for foot-and-mouth disease—because we have stringent controls over imported animals and meat designed to prevent this highly virulent disease from entering this country. The same will apply to hog cholera when it is eradicated.

## **When will hog cholera be eradicated?**

In many cases, it takes an epidemic to motivate people to eradicate a disease. Fortunately, we were able to embark on the hog cholera eradication program without the stimulus of an epidemic. Certainly, from the standpoint of efficiency, expense, and practicality, this was the time to start a program.

Given this situation, it was estimated at the beginning of the program that it would take from 8 to 10 years to eradicate hog cholera. With the continued support of the swine industry, it should be possible to meet these goals. This would mean practical eradication by the end of 1969, declaration of the Nation as officially hog cholera-free in 1972.

## **What can I do to help eradicate hog cholera?**

Basically, there are five things you as an individual producer can do.

- First of all, have your pigs vaccinated to provide a wall of protection against hog cholera. This is a part of the eradication program for which the individual producer is primarily responsible.

- Second, follow shipping rules when you buy or sell pigs. For interstate shipments of feeder pigs and breeding stock this means, in general, official vaccination plus a health certificate and clean transportation. State and Federal animal disease control officials can furnish details on shipping rules.
- Third, don't feed table scraps or garbage to hogs, unless you're equipped to cook it properly. Hog cholera virus may exist in raw pork scraps and spread the disease. Boiling garbage for 30 minutes will kill the virus.
- Fourth, report any outbreak or suspected outbreak of hog cholera immediately to your veterinarian or county agent. Speed and thoroughness of reporting are essential to the success of the eradication program. And here again, individual producers are primarily responsible for how well this aspect of the program works.
- And fifth, if an outbreak should strike your herd, observe all quarantines and cooperate fully with regulatory workers who are trying to locate the source of the disease and prevent any further spread.

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